

# BLUE GLASS BLADE

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## UNIVERSE vs. SPOOKS

### Affirmative Argument of the Non-Existence of a God and Future Life

#### EXPOSITION OF THE PRINCIPLES OF THE MATERIALIST ASSOCIATION

(By President Otto Wettstein, S. S.)

"In discussing anything the weight of reasoning, and not of authority, should be sought, since the authority of those who profess to teach us, on the whole, a hindrance to those who wish to learn. For the latter case to depend upon their own judgment, and take for granted the conclusions of those in whom they confide!"—Cicero.

"The test of Truth is Reason, not Faith; for to the court of Reason must be submitted even the claims of Faith."—Amrose Bierce.

"People are not converted to Atheism, because who wants to be a fool all his life?"—Grier Kidder.

"Reason is the light, the sun of the brain. It is the compass of the mind, the ever constant Northern star, the mountain peak that lifts itself above all clouds."—Ingersoll.

Some seek the belief that best conforms to their vanity and ideas of comfort.

Materialists search for facts and truth, regardless of preferences and consequences. As Huxley said: "We are not here to enquire what we would prefer, but what is true."

The conflict between science and theism (including spiritism) is a contest between reality and mystery; between fact and fiction; between an immutable eternal order pervading nature, and caprice of miracle, between everything and spooks.

Materialism is the science of all sciences—Monism, Ontology, Physics, Biology, Physiology, Chemistry, Astronomy, Psychology, Pharmacology, and others—all must be classified under the head of Materialism. If we confine our belief strictly to what we KNOW, to facts, truth and to what we can rationally infer, then we are Materialists.

"Materialism" not only implies oneness—nature ONLY in distinction from nature AND GOD; but also plainly defines what this unity consists of: Matter. That is why "Monism" is objectionable—it might imply all is God, all is spirit, all is mind or other suppositious. "Materialism" defines itself,—"Monism" leaves the novice in doubt.

Materialism reduces the mysteries of nature and life to their minimum. Theism vastly augments the problem beyond hope of final solution. The mysteries of nature are great, the mysteries of a God and spiritism is infinitely greater.

Materialism explains everything which has been, and will be explained—every phenomenon, event, law, growth, activity, formation, process, etc., from tangible facts or forces. Here are a few facts, from "London Lancet" which prove that there is one, etc.: "Beyond our atmosphere, life is impossible. At a height of even five miles the pulse rate increases, heart action irregular, secretions diminish, while evaporation from the skin and lungs is greatly augmented. There are swellings of the veins, bleeding of the nose and a sense of being unable to use the legs and arms. At six miles consciousness ceases and the aeronaut, minus quickly restored to normal atmospheric conditions expires."

Spiritists likewise ignore the prominent fact of nature that all organisms are transient—begin and end—are born and die. Yet they believe that all the dead (though the constituents of their bodies are scattered and absorbed by other forms) are still alive, duplicate men and women without physical bodies, made of nothing,

or what? Isn't it about time the S. P. R. would tell us what disembodied mortals are made of?

Physiologists and medical men KNOW that every bone, muscle, organ, artery and nerve is a necessity to the life of a perfect man. This physical structure IS the man; then how can we believe man can survive its destruction? We cannot even think of souls or spirits without first investing them with physical structure and material dry goods.

Here spookists insist in reply that "Neither can we see electricity, yet are aware of its terrible potentiality." But there is no analogy between an inorganic force or fluid like electricity and organic spirit forms—the counterpart of man and women. If not this—if transformed into gas, air or electricity—how can we again meet our beloved dead and hope to retain our own identity?

Souls or spirits must possess the form and functions of men and women! But such forms and functions necessitate organic structure—flesh, blood, bones, brain, etc. In the absence of the latter the former are unthinkable.

Agnostics say: "It is impossible to prove there is no God; you cannot traverse an infinite universe in search of him." I do not have to search for him—he has to come to me! If he does not come to me, this alone proves there is no such a being, because the primal attribute of "Deity" must be omnipresence. If then, God is not where I am, where you are, or where science has penetrated with its giant telescopes, then this proves conclusively that "He" is nowhere. To believe that such a being is everywhere, in spite of "His" invisibility, and in spite of our knowledge that life is impossible among suns and planets, is to prostitute our intellect and to believe in an infinite spook.

"We KNOW the supernatural does not exist," said G. Ingersoll in his last great lecture "What Is Religion?" Conceding that he did "not know" in the early years of his brilliant career, he boldly and honestly rejected the timid attitude of an Agnostic; after more analytical research in the domain of science, and finally but unequivocally placed himself before the world as a radical and aggressive Materialist.

On the highway of reason—in the evolution of religious thought—there is no stopping place for Romanism and scientific Materialism. The Agnostic should not be an Agnostic BECAUSE HE IS AN AGNOSTIC. He reasons, and pronounces the fundamental dogmas of Christianity in the domain of science, and finally but unequivocally placed himself before the world as a radical and aggressive Materialist.

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Thesis entirely agrees with the well known facts of nature—that life primarily necessitates conditions favorable to life. Such conditions do not exist within interstellar space.

Infinitely extensive God or a "Great Man" were introduced among this vast infinite system of soaring, burning cosmic bodies, these spooks would be instantly torn to fragments or incinerated.

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## HUMAN AFFECTION

### The Handmaid of Reason, and Love, the Inspiration, Which Leads to Hopes of Another Life

(By J. B. Wilson, M. D.)

Men and women existed before progress, before governments, before scientific and philosophic research. Love existed before these. Love is the only religion—the purple life of life. It is the religion of humanity; spreading itself, naturally, toward the savage nature and making men become humane and charitable.

Love is the Burden of all of Nature's Odes. It is heard in the song of the awakening birds, when the sunlight smites the woods with fire, and they strain their warbling throats to record their hymns, and chant their carols blest.

It is heard in the wild life of the elfin wind, dancing and prancing and the forest boughs; in the fret and fall of the millstream, as o'er bar and bank it brawls in boisterous glee; in the gale which curls the lake's bright lips, and lifts a deeper, purer water to the light; in the part and splash of the rivulet, speeding, sparkling through dark woodlands, as if a nail's silvery feet glanced through the star beams on a calm summer night; in the marriage of the flowers which upon the meadows are fringed the brookside, with strands of daisies and of pearls; in the sighing winds, when summer has exchanged her robes of green, and arrayed herself in gorgeous tints of gold and purple—when all the trees have tormented and the golden rod, and rust-colored and bend in the autumn breeze; in the moaning blast, when winter whistles through numb fingers, and the drowsy snow blows in great drifts across the flowers; in the crackle of the fire and the roar of the chimney—in the merriest of the hearth, around which fondle affections as purely blind, as a cloudless blue sky with the light of hope, in the lullaby song, in laughter and tears, in social glee, in song of plough-boy, in the symphony of the composer, in the hum of industry, in the tramp of progress, in the cadence of night winds in the attem of the eucalyptus, in the deep water, in the high air, and in the bowels of the earth, Love is the condition and employment of all things.

Love is first, love is last, love is best, love directs education and science—inspiring progress—love governs the world. The man who loves is touched with Nature's chief charms; and all her mystic emotions, her sublimest moods, her softest lights, her sweetest sounds, her love's fervor, in him unite to found a habitation and a home, and so live in peace with all the world.

By love, I do not mean the response by sex alone, but that union of the higher emotions, which brings not only individuals, but all the human family together in ties of fellowship and goodwill; which inspires friendship, could not be a union of interests, which leads the strong to help the weak; which tames the wild nature of man, by the all powerful might of beauty, harmony and necessity. Every thing beautiful in nature—form, color, sound, light, all contribute to these civilizing and gracious ends. This is love.

The father loves to give his offspring education and opportunities never known to himself. Nations love to bequeath strength and power to the generations which follow. From love of justice, men go to battle and die. It may be in some form or other selfish actuates, leads and compels men to higher things.

It is love which immortalizes genius, which leads man to hope to live again; and as long as man loves, that hope will live. Because I love, I hope to live again; I want to live again. This is a normal desire, and just as natural as the desire to live tomorrow.

All around me I see change, everlasting, eternal change, and I am led from this observation to believe that death ends all. All around me too I see progression, endless, eternal progression, and from this observation, I am led to wish that the progression began in me, will be endless, eternal progression.

The idea of extinction is not pleasing to me. The desire for extinction is unnatural, abnormal in anybody of healthy digestion and loving nature; in any one, to whom the captured air is ringing with earth's music.

"Aye, but to die and go we know not where; To lie in cold obstruction and to rot; This sensible warm motion to become A kneaded clod; and the delighted spirit To bathe in fiery floods; or to reside In thrilling region of thick-ribbed ice; To be imprisoned in the viewless winds And blown with restless violence Round about the pendant world."

The immortal bard expressed my feelings. "It is not pleasant to me to contemplate extinction—to rot and to be imprisoned in the viewless winds." There is no consummation in such a change. There is no inspiring object in it. Nature, which is ever unfolding mystery upon mystery, which is without limitations, can manifest her supremacy, only in the accomplishment of that greatest of all mysteries, a progressive intellectual immortality. If there be an intellectual purpose in nature, it is this accomplishment. Nature is not supreme, if she stops short of this purpose.

I hear it frequently said: "The worst that can be said of death, is that it is a sweet rest." This was a frequent expression of Ingersoll. I do not see any "sweetness" in an indefinite rest. I do not see anything desirable in rest at all—no mystery, no philosophy, no sublime purpose, no supreme accomplishment.

Much rest is wearisome. Give me action—give me contention, give me the storm and the tempest always in sweetness to the "sweet rest" of extinction. If Nature had a purpose in my organization, her purpose is thwarted if she does not extend the development she took the trouble to begin.

If for no other purpose, I want to live again, led by the curiosity to see how things turn out. There's something in this; but to die and dip immediately into eerbreen darkness—there's nothing in that to the credit of either Nature or God. The healthy mind may believe it, but no healthy mind, no mind that loves, can wish it. It may be true, and I think often it is true, but to live it is not an attractive truth.

So I want to live again, I want to see how things turn out. I feel that I am just beginning to grow. I shall just be ready to accomplish something when I die. I want to continue to expand and progress.

I want the same for all others especially for the ignorant, the suffering, the deformed, the vicious, the depraved, and all the helpless of earth.

I want to see every flower of humanity, nipped, like Hicliand Mary, "by death's untimely frost," bud and blossom into full and fragrant being.

I want to see those youthful geniuses, Hypatia, Burns, Byron, Shelley, Keats, Keats, Poe and May Collins reemerge and scintillate in the crystalline spheres.

I want to see those who have dreamed glorious dreams of the good they would do if they only had the choice and opportunity. I want to see the broken heart mended.

I want to see justice crown the martyr. I want to see the freedom eaged soul, which sighed the sad hours heavily away, through long years of dungeon gloom, pass consecrated through the bars of death to delicious liberty.

I want to see the persecuted face the persecutor, where all things are (Continued on Page 4.)

#### SOME BIBLE TEACHINGS. WITH COMMENTS ON CREATION STORIES.

The writer of the Book of Genesis commences by saying "In the beginning" but this is not where the beginning was. He says that light was created on the first day; also on the fourth; that three whole days went by without either the heat, light or rising or setting of the sun. He says that the earth after creation was "without form and void." How is that for an inspired contradiction? He says that two females had to be created before a progeny was started on the sixth day and one in the garden of Eden. He tells us that the first man born into the world was a murderer; that he murdered his brother; and the Lord, instead of punishing him for the act, protects him by putting a mark upon him, lest any should kill him. No wonder so many murderers get off so easy; they have the words of inspiration to protect them. The writer doesn't tell us what became of the female created and blessed on the sixth day, but tells us that Adam was found alone and lonesome in the garden of Eden. Then while one account of creation would have been the greatest of plenty, he destroys both the sense and truth of the first account by undertaking to give us two.

In his first attempt, he says that man, male and female, were the last things created. In his second attempt, he has man made before the animals, and then brought before him to see what he would call them. This writer tells us that God ended his work on the seventh day, and that on the first day he created the sun, moon and stars. Several times in the Bible God is spoken of as saying and doing things that he was sorry for, and then repenting for what he says. He repeats having made man on the sixth day, and then on the first day. What a confusion! God went to do his repeating. This writer also says that Noah was the first man to be found drunk, and that Abraham was the first to lie about his wife, and that Lot was the first charged with the crime of incest. He says that God has made frequent visits to this earth and that he took two men to heaven alive. He also says that he was at me time made a god and supplied with a people.

This writer must have written the Book of Genesis altogether from hearsay, as we don't find the record of his birth until we reach the Book of Exodus. How could he have written any one else inspired him to write a book and he not yet born. Then we don't find either his own name nor the god that inspired him signed to a word in the book.

Thomas Jefferson once remarked that a manuscript not worthy the author's name was not worth reading. So we think about the Bible. Five books are attributed to this writer, but the truth is no man can prove that he ever wrote a word in them. He must have been a pretty smart chap whoever he was, for when he comes to close his last book, he beats the minister out of his fees for a funeral sermon, by preaching it himself, giving us a full account of his death and burial while he is still living; and it takes a pretty smart fellow to do that.

Yours truly,  
JOEL M. BERRY.

Not To Be Wasted.

A gentleman lying on his deathbed was questioned by his inconsolable prospective widow. "Poor Mike," she said, "I have everything that would make you comfortable. 'Anythin' ye ask for I'll get for ye.'"

"Please, ye begid," he responded. "I think I'd like a wee taste of the ham I smell a-bellin' in the kitchen."

"Arrah, go on," responded Bridget. "Divil a bit of that ham ye'll get. 'Tis for the wake."

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By  
CHARLES CHILTON MOORE.  
And edited by him until his death,  
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JAMES E. HUGHES, Box 292, Lexington, Kentucky.

The Blade struck a popular cord in the reduction of its price to one dollar a year. It is the purpose of the publisher to make the Blade a great popular paper, and to do it by getting the Blade placed in the hands of the people. In this connection we wish to announce that payment on back subscriptions will be received at the same rate. The address on the paper shows the date to which your subscription has been paid. In returning for back subscriptions or renewals, credit will be given at the rate of one dollar per year. And hear in mind, you can do some good missionary work by sending the Blade to two of your friends for one year for five dollars.

We have been fighting against time in the office of the Blade for the past month. We are calendar makers on a large scale, and the general business prosperity has tended to swamp the office with work of this kind. As is well known this work must be completed before the first of January. Consequently the Blade has suffered some little by being a day or two behind in its appearance. The first of January is here now, however; the calendar work is all done, and there seems to be no reason why the Blade should not make its weekly visits promptly and regularly. We have some bright promises of articles from friends of the old days, of articles that will place the Blade where it belongs—in the front rank of publications of its kind.

We have received a number of letters from friends calling our attention to the fact that certain scurrilous circulars attacking the Blade and accusing the publisher of duplicity have recently been sent through the mails, and asking why we do not reply to them. We have not seen these circulars, know little of their contents and of course cannot reply. The one humorous thing of this avalanche of billingsgate is that the late editorial writer of the Blade received the magnificent salary of six dollars per week. In looking over our books we find that just four times that amount was handed him every Saturday night, and our books are open

to any one else who cares to look. He was a man of some talent—too much talent to place upon the market at a dollar a day. We hear a great deal now about peace on earth and good will to men. We desire peace, and entertain for all men good will. Our experience has been, and perhaps yours has, that the backslider answers himself. That he is sure

"A tangled web to weave  
When he attempts to deceive."

We have entirely too much confidence in the American love of fair play—the American idea of a square deal—to lose much sleep over underhand methods to destroy us. On the streets at night we are apt to keep a lookout for the foot-pads and the hold-up man; but safe in our office or home, attacked from gentry of this kind are powerless.

One thing you will notice, with a big N, is that the Blade is going right along from week to week; that it did not die on December 12th. In court, false in one particular, false in all; so in all walks of life.

We were pleasantly surprised one day last week at receiving a visit from a prominent Freethinker, who is an officer in the American Rationalist Association. He stated he had received a number of circular letters, the first announcing the death of the Blade, another denying the accuracy of the financial statement we recently published in connection with the paper. After going carefully over the books with us, and making some inquiries on his own account, he announced "you continue my subscription and you continue my subscription to the Blade." We were glad to receive this visit, and would be glad to receive others from Freethinkers who should happen to be in the vicinity. Our subscribers are our friends. We have no secrets from them. We are always pleased to show them the books and extend them a touch of the genuine article of true Kentucky hospitality.

One must read these long winter evenings. "Dog Kennel in the Orient" by the late Charles C. Moore, and "A Trip to Rome" by Dr. J. B. Wilson are two books that combine all that is amusing, entertaining and instructive. They are both for sale at the office of the Blade. Price \$1.25 each.

We have always said that the great fight of the future will be between Catholicism and Free thought. Protestantism is an illogical compromise, an impossible reconciliation of faith and reason, and is therefore but temporary. It has been breaking up ever since it first appeared. See multiple, doctrines faded away into nothingness, published at last in the New Theology, which is really nothing but Deism under the guise of Christianity. The Catholic Church, however, holds on to the old dogmas and the old worship. It makes no concessions to the modern spirit. It is the main secret of its strength. It really represents the past—with all its superstitions and traditions. Recognizing this, as we do, that the Catholic Church is the great and final enemy of Free thought, we still propose to stand by our own principles in fighting it. Our worst temptation is the temptation to resort to our enemy's tactics. The Catholic Church lies and falsifies;—but we must not; the Catholic Church persecutes—but we must not; the Catholic Church murders—but we must not. If we were to slay a Cardinal, for instance, in revenge for the execution of Ferrer, we should be false to our own ideas; and what is the use of winning in a war only to find in the hour of victory that you have lost all that you started fighting for? What is the use of reaching the goal if you are dirty along the way? Wrong principles? How have you triumphed over the enemies of liberty and light if you have adopted all their views in the course of the struggle?—London Freethinker.

### CORRESPONDENCE.

**Kind Words from an Old Subscriber.**  
SHILOH, O., Dec. 18—James E. Hughes, Publisher: Dear Brother: In your issue of the 12th I received your hand yesterday, and am very, VERY glad to know that you are going to keep the Blade running. Yours fraternally—CHAS. R. KIMBERLY.

### Keep the Blade Going.

SHILOH, O., Dec. 18—Jas. E. Hughes, proprietor of Blue Grass Blade: Dear Free thought Brother: We want C. Moore's paper to live, and don't you dispose of it as long as it is on a paying basis; but sell it if you don't want it. Don't undertake to kill it—your might fail. Yours earnestly—CHAS. R. KIMBERLY.

### Never Received Article.

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN., Dec. 13.—Editor Blade: Late in August last I mailed to The Blade my 32nd article of the series entitled, "The History of Religion." I write to ask whether you received it and if so, whether you intend to publish it? If not, I wish to know, as I may offer it to other publishers; and also, in that case I shall not find it necessary to renew the subscriptions which I have been paying for other readers, and which will soon expire. Some years ago, I was asked by Mr. Hughes to write frequently for the Blade, and once when its publishers thought that the little paper must soon be discontinued. Mr. Geo. Vale, Mrs. Vale, Uriah Smith, D. D., Dr. Wilson, Mrs. Henry and a very few other writers besides myself sustained it until it became established. Through its columns I may reach a few Christians whom I can help in the right way. Please answer through The Blade. Yours respectfully—SUSAN J. PECK.

### Kind Words from People's Press.

CHICAGO—Comrade Hughes: If I can help you in the way of notices to keep The Blue Grass Blade going, let me know or send me any notice you think may help. We need every Free thought paper we now have in the cause, so keep it going if you can, even if you have to cut down the size and expense, same as People's Press. Let me hear from you. Heartily—J. B. LEXAU.

### Stuck on New Size.

CANNON FALLS, Dec. 21.—Friend Jas. E. Hughes: Received the Blade yesterday in the new shape. You say you want letters from your subscribers as here good. I am 7 years old and am very proud of the fact; it enables me to shove off the modesty,—that false modesty that is put on the common classes by the conventional line of our civilization; especially the farming class—the peasants. It is getting to be a scientific fact that five acres of land is amply sufficient to support a family. Now supposing every reader of this should put five acres about five acres of land for soil and con. I think many of our financial problems would be solved, especially the strike question,—who knows? Then there are our political lies. The lie of government could be abolished by adopting the plan of proportional representation; the electoral precinct call a caucus and elect a commission—a committee of say ten on the Proportional Representation plan; this committee to nominate a ticket, form plans of procedure and see to things generally. A very simple operation, but I believe it would do away with the lie of the majority (fools and rogues). O, yes, there are other lies except the lie of religion, that is just as bad. We should fight the lies of mankind; it is the soul and keeps us in good, healthy action. Yours fraternally—PROF. ULYSSES TANNER, of Nature's University.

### You Are a Blade Subscriber.

TOWARD, KANS., Dec. 26.—Jas. E. Hughes, Editor Blade: Dear Hughes: I was both surprised and delighted to receive a copy of The Blade; surprised that it still survives after Charlesworth, in his own letter, said that it was dead for all time, and asking Blade subscribers to fill out blank agreement to accept the "Rationalist"; a new publication to be launched some time in the near future, which I, and no doubt many others did, as my subscription to The Blade is paid for another year and rescripted for by Mr. Charlesworth. I suppose that if the Blade had "gone glimmering" I would accept The Rationalist in lieu of refunding my money, but my heart was heavy at the loss, or rather the demise of The Blade. But lo! and behold, today it came in its old familiar form, and my heart rejoiced as if a long-lost friend had appeared. I love the old form so much better than the new. The new Blade was dry and uninteresting, and I do hope for the successful continuation of the Blade with ever-increasing interest. And now, Mr. Hughes, will you please advise whether I am a subscriber of The Blade or the "Rationalist"? It seems to me I was tricked into the transferring of my interest in the Blade to the Rationalist. I most anxiously await your opinion in this case. I shouted for joy when I saw the old familiar face in the corner of The Blade.—MRS. IDA COON.

### Send Them In.

NAT'L MILITARY HOME, OHIO, Dec. 26.—Jas. E. Hughes: Dear Sir: I am sorry to see any dissatisfaction in the publication of The Blade. I am disappointed also in not seeing any of my articles in print that I have sent in during the last year. I have just renewed my subscription, but if you intend to pay no attention to my writings in the future, you may stop sending me The Blade, and I will correspond with a paper that will be glad to get my contributions. So hoping you may not feel aggrieved at my wishing to see fair play, I am yours truly—JOEL M. BERRY.

glad to get my contributions. So hoping you may not feel aggrieved at my wishing to see fair play, I am yours truly—JOEL M. BERRY.

### Like the New Blade.

SYCAMORE, KANS., Dec. 22nd.—Jas. E. Hughes, Ed. Blue Grass Blade, Lexington, Ky.: Dear Sir: The Blade of the 19th is at hand, and I am proud to say it is the best number of my notion that has been put out for some time. I note that it has put on its old clothes again. I like it. It looks good to me. And the placing of Brother C. C. Moore's photo at the head of the editorial column is very timely and a fitting recognition, in a measure, of the good that Bro. Moore did for humanity while living. While I did not agree with Bro. Moore on his capitalistic views (as I am a Socialist), yet I admire him for his frank and outspoken, and aggressive—just the right kind of a man for a leader. He was built of the kind of material that does things. He had the courage of his convictions, and faced death as "One who was the drapery of his couch about him and lies down to pleasant dreams." I remain yours truly—J. F. MAYO.

### AN OPEN LETTER.

Chardon, O., Dec. 25, '03.  
"U. Dhamatoka, Dear Sir:—  
"It may appear rather presumptuous for so humble an individual as myself to write to one of the 'Wise Men of the East,' but having seen noble expressions in three of the Liberal sheets of America from your pen concerning Thomas Paine, I feel constrained to say that you and your people award him more justice than Americans who live in the nation which he labored to free from the infamous superstition of kings and the villainous hypocrisy of priests. It is apparent that if Mr. Paine had done for India what he did for either America, France or England, justice and exaltation, instead of calumny and vituperation, would have been his lot. The American Free-thinkers realize that his works are following his name, and that both are presently standing around the world. His works are his monument, grander and greater than marble can inspire; loftier than any emulation, vindication or exaltation that his friends can bestow. It is an irrefutable fact that the presentist stands before the world as the most profound political writer of all nations. His monarchial sentiments have grated upon the sensibilities of kings—the hyena of monarchy.

In his "Rights of Man," and in his "Dissertation on First Principles of Government," may be found some of the most exemplary principles of government, coupled with those lofty and trenchant appeals of human liberty, some of which were penned under the most perilous situations that the world has ever witnessed. He has been justly termed "The man of three nations, disowned by all." Vincent Parke & Co., New York City, have brought out his writings in the most beautiful style. The new edition, styled "The Independence Edition," and sell for \$3.50. I trust you will see that at least one set will be sent to India.

I now come to other matters. First, the nation needs you here, for every penitentiary is crammed to its utmost capacity with Christian criminals, and every poor-house is filled with the unfortunate. When Mr. Gandhi was here (at the time of the World's Fair) I wrote him and received a prompt and courteous reply. A friend of mine went and saw him and obtained his photo. Can you give his address?

In Conway's book, "My Pilgrimage to the Wise Men of the East," a fine picture of Mr. Gandhi is given. As it has been 2 years since the book was loaned me by Judge Metcalf, I do not remember whether there is a picture of it or not.

Have you met Dr. Peebles? He has been five times around the Globe. I have heard him lecture, talked with and received letters from him. He is 89, and in his last letter to me, he says: "I am hale and hearty." I met Dr. Gandhi in a vegetarian restaurant in London. Mr. Gandhi presented me with a copy of "The Unknown Life of Jesus Christ." Dr. Peebles says "It is a fraud gotten up to make money." While there is no evidence that he ever lived, the question arises that if he did live, where was he during those 18 missing years of which the New Testament is silent as the tomb. There must have been some foundation for the New Testament, therefore I am of the opinion that he was never there, as above stated, there is no evidence.

On January 21 I shall be in Cleveland by invitation of T. C. Jeff-

eries, 612 Ansel Road, and shall recall your words as given in The Blade, and shall rejoice to know that on all sides of the globe men and women will be assembled in commemoration of the man "whose country was the world, and whose religion was to do good." With high esteem. I am yours for liberty and justice. B. O. FENTON.

The murder of Francisco Ferrer surprised a great many people. It did not surprise us. Religious reaction, all over the world, is fighting against liberty and light with diabolical energy; and we are bound to smile contemptuously at the milk-and-water "unbelievers" who huddle about the fight for freedom being over (which it is as far as they are concerned) and the victory won. The fight for freedom is never over while it has any enemies left; any man who is not a friend of freedom is there are any friends of superstition left. The wisest of the sons of men well said, that "Truth can never be confirmed enough, though doubt is almost indispensable. He doubts if he can, no rest and he is thankful to the soldiers of human liberation in this world. That is one of those idle promises that are offered to credulous people in the new world. Even in America—the grand home of the noble right of freedom, etc., etc.—the Catholic Church is making great headway, and the liberty of the press is fast meeting a fresh menace. Dr. E. B. Foote, of New York, writes us almost despondently. He doubts if the cause of Free thought is "holding its own" over there "in contention with the better organization of the opposition." He says that "Catholic influences are working through politics in public places, influencing legislation and the action of officials. The Cointest mail law, which makes of sex questions or the question of the United States, becomes broader and more stringent with the next year; and the very mild discussion of sex questions of the question of population will be penalized and suppressed." So, after the first of January," Dr. Foote writes, "if not already, you can rejoice in greater freedom of winter than we can."

What a lesson for those who would the divine right of monarchies for the divine right of kings—London Free-thinker.

### THE DOUBTER'S PRAYER.

(By John Emerson Roberts.)  
O, thou infinite, invisible, nameless One, whom men must name, and naming call Thee God. If thou art, why may not man know Thee as thou art? If thou art not, why should the thought of Thee embitter and pervert the hearts of men?

Thy worshippers are guessers, and guessing at the Divine hidden, men, like children at play, fall out and quarrel, turning happiness and joy to strife and tears.

In Thy name they have built dungeons—piled fagots and devised tortures from which life fled to the cool embrace of death, the life of the only friend. They have called Thee maker of Paradise and Hell—Thou the infinite, and have said the glory of Thy throne shone more refulgent, the music of celestial joy was sweetened by the cry of anguish and the sobs of pain which rose and reached the heartless happiness of the blest. In Thy name men have trampled into mire the sweet earth with blood and touched with fingers of hate every nerve of pain—violated every holy human right—curse the world with every crime, and in Thy name, listening for Thy unspeaking voice, men have been heedless of the cry of a suffering world; reading the revelation they said was Thine, they have been blind to truth, deaf to reason, and enemies of knowledge. Following Thee, they have gone astray—serving Thee they have hardened their fellowman. Dwellers in huts have built Thy cathedrals and overlaid them with barbaric gold. Wearers of rags have worn purple and fine linen for indolent tyrants claiming to act for Thee. Priests have fattened while

children cried for bread. And Thou art God? Hasten Thou been mother, the cry of children had touched Thy heart. Mary's tears as she watched the death agony of the cross, were kinder than Thy silence in the skies. Help us to forgive Thee. If Thou wouldst have Thy name revered on earth, make kind and gracious those who enshrine it on their garments and hallow it from their hearts.

If religion is to endure among men, cast out from it the devil of hatred and clothe it with the comeliness of sanity and love. If Thy temples are to remain open to the light and make them hospitable to every honest thought. Since Thou art silent, may men speak modestly when they speak of Thee? Since Thou art hidden, may men not claim thee as?

And if in the limitless mystery of life and death there be those who, seeking cannot find, pondering cannot know—who question the eternal silence in vain, who say at last Thou art not—turn not Thou from them! May honest doubt find favor in Thy sight; reason untearing walk the earth; character be counted as salvation's very self; the noble purpose and unselfish aim be dear to Thee; virtue unshaming meet Thy searching gaze, and love, the key unlocking at the gates of joy—if Thou art God.

### THE HOLY RELIO CLUB.

(By Joseph Rogers.)

I. Johnson, the Bouncer.

With hair that's light and skin that dyes red,  
He shows the Danish gore the ancient dead.  
Have you as artist's dops, to paint their heirs  
With facetious goss and tonings that were theirs;  
Besides, they gave their names to kith and kin,  
So every man may know why hair and skin  
Are light or dark, or foreign to the tints  
That other breeding round its product tints.

The name of Johnson spells a Danish source  
For the clasp who ruled our councils with brute force.

As bouncer, for 'ye old and noble

This heavy lad no form of work would dodge.

The sacred bones by which the members swore

They'd air their likes behind the

Were valued junk the chairman duly blest,

And which our Johnson fully boiled and dressed;

Reminders of the men and times long gone,

Their phallic facings at our meetings shone

To keep alive the memories of the past,

And that our order treasure trove amass'd.

Dick's martial eye would flash a fierce dissent

If some deluded lad on mischief bent

Would try, by skit or joke, or "thoughtless" deed

To prove that bailed bones we did not need.

Yon Furness folk may oft have heard his roar,

As standing by his cart outside your door,

He gave by use of lungs a value to his spuds,

By bawling out a rival's brand of goods.

Well! then, with such a whoop he drown'd 'd the groans

That aimed to ditch the order's cherished bones.

But then, what'er on Johnson's color we may write,

The fact remains, he's strictly white.

Salt Lake City, Utah.

He who is not master of himself is unworthy to rule others.

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## THE HUMAN MIND

### WHAT IS IT?

(By Channing Severance.)

The human will has always been regarded by Christians and certain individuals mentally tied to the Bible, as an independent force in man that always had perfect freedom to act, and voluntary choice was what decided action.

There is no more basis for such a claim than there would be to say that a weather-vane controls the direction of the wind. What is termed the human will is nothing but the force of man's desires; and any man who is rash enough to assert that he creates and controls his desires, can be knocked out in one round by reason and logic. The Chinese have a proverb that runs thusly: "Great men have will; others only feeble wishes." When this is inspected and analyzed, we find that all there is to it is this: Great men have stronger desires than some others, who are called and rate with the nobodies. No man ever performed an act of any kind that was not preceded by desire, and all desires—no exception—are involuntary comers.

Desires are the controlling factors in man's lives, and the strength of them decides the force of man's actions. With weak desires, no man will ever do great things or try to; but if his desires are strong and persistent he will go through hell to gratify them; and then some one will say, "What a will power!" There is no "will power" about it. If a man's desires are strong enough to drive him, he will be driven by them; if they are not, he will depend more on circumstances to gratify them than on personal exertion. Lazy men have weak desires, and they drift through life instead of making hard and persistent efforts to accomplish something; while active, vigorous men have strong desires and work with vim and vigor to gratify them. A certain brick-layer had a desire after he had followed that business for years, to be a Methodist preacher, and that desire was so strong it drove him into the pulpit. Had desire of another kind, like that of finding the North Pole, or being the champion pugilist of the world, got hold of him, his course in life would have been different desire and not one of the others! I don't know, you don't know, we do. Desires come, exist and exert their influence, and we know no more about them; and these involuntary visitors in found the source and the cause of man's every act.

I am a philosophical fatalist, and I desire any man that walks the earth to show that we are anything but puppets in the power of universal forces. Every man is what he is from necessity, and we are all playing the parts that circumstances in life have decreed we should play, whether the same be good or bad from the world's moral standpoint. If we have weak desires, it is not our fault; if we have strong desires we deserve no credit for them, but the same character we do have will determine our actions, for desire is the main-spring in every man's life, and "will power" is nothing but another name for it. We are no more free moral agents or actors than free choices, than the fish in the sea. There are because they preferred that life to be on the land; and as we "walk downward to the tomb" we go as blind men, for we cannot see one inch into the future.

### THE PAST AND THE PRESENT.

To appreciate the present we must now and then look into the past and make comparisons. That the world is moving ahead with rapid strides is too apparent for denial, and we are living in an age that nothing in all history ever approached in discoveries, inventions and general utilities that contribute to man's comfort and pleasure. Why are we progressing so remarkably, and why is the world so full of light and knowledge, of intellectual forces and the beneficial results of rational thinking? This query has but one reply that fits it, and gives the true reason for the wonderful activities of mind and muscle that everywhere confront us in Christianity has lost the despotic power it once had, and it is no longer a crime to think freely with imprisonment or death as a penalty; or to have ideas not found in that compend of superstition and nonsense called the Holy Bible. While the world was in bondage to priestcraft and this book, it stood still, and progress was as impossible as the movement of a ship severely anchored or tied by powerful hawsers to some dock.

For long centuries Christianity and the Bible were the world in a bond, and yet there are people so stupidly foolish as to bemoan the fact that past power has departed, and to wish

for its restoration. Such people are constantly prating about what will be when these two evils regain ascendancy and once more dominate the realms of Christendom; but were such a thing possible, no greater calamity could befall the race. We know what these two forces did when triumphant in society, and their cruel and bloody record that cannot be destroyed, is sufficient to damn them both to the end of time.

There was no such thing as liberty of thought and action when Christian priests had their way, and he who thinks there would be if they had it again, knows not the nature of priestcraft. All religions are naturally stationary, for they are tied to the dead past and forever trying to keep the world looking backward instead of forward; and that man whose mind is satisfied with Bible literature is a fit associate for those semibarbarians that wrote the book.

It is live ideas that move the world, and Christianity has always fought them for self preservation. When priests pressed last year, we perceived, its priesthood saw and proclaimed the fact that the art of printing must be destroyed or it would destroy them, and the general decline of Christianity and its power from that day to this gives them some standing as prophets.

Looking back to those days with the inquisition trying to insure uniformity of thought, and the ignorance and stupidity of mankind in general, who that thinks and reasons would revive the "good old times," who would suggest that period as more useable than the present? No one but a religious fanatic or members of a moribund priesthood. One of the first useful inventions to save human labor was the steamship, which would have been a "good old time," who would suggest that period as more useable than the present? No one but a religious fanatic or members of a moribund priesthood. One of the first useful inventions to save human labor was the steamship, which would have been a "good old time," who would suggest that period as more useable than the present? No one but a religious fanatic or members of a moribund priesthood.

Modern civilization has come in spite of Christianity, and all the material benefits and blessings that we enjoy today, have come gradually as men applied their time and efforts to this world, and ceased living for the sole purpose of saving their souls and getting into heaven, of which no one knows anything whatever.

### THE CREATION LEGEND.

(By Joel M. Berry.)

In the book of Genesis we find two accounts of creation, differing in nearly every detail. So much so, at least, that they neither be reconciled with each other, nor made to harmonize with science or reason. The late Dean Stanley admitted that "the first and second chapters of Genesis contain two narratives differing from each other in almost every particular of time, place and order."

The legend is like the "Fall of Man," "The Deluge," and "The Tower of Babel," of Babylonian origin, all being obtained during the captivity.

But here is what we wish to call the attention of the reader to. Note that in the first account, which includes the first chapter and to the third verse of the second chapter, the word "God" is used in the singular number every time. But when we come to the second account, which commences with the fourth verse of the second chapter, we find the plural word "Lord God" is used in every instance unto the end of the chapter.

Where does the difference come in between the words "God" and "Lord God"? Dr. Huxley, in his "Evolution of Man," says the first account was written under or during the Elohistic period, and the second under what is called the Yavistic period. The difference consisting in the appellation applied to deity, the first being Elohim, the second being Yahweh, erroneously rendered "Lord God" in the authorized version.

The writer says that earth was "without form and void." Now every object must have some form, which is an essential of material existence. "Void" simply means empty or vacant. So to speak of the earth as being—i. e. existing, occupying space, and yet void—is a direct contradiction. Again, light and darkness could not have been created on the first or any other day, for every intelligent, educated person knows

that they are both produced by the relative position of the earth with regard to the sun. But the sun is not considered the source of light, and darkness could not be devised, for they never were united. Again, in speaking of the fall of man, it must be borne in mind that the Genesis cosmogony is based upon mistaken ideas of the universe, the shape and movements of the earth and sun, and their mutual relations. And upon the truth of the occurrences reported in Genesis rests the whole Christian theory of "Redemption," for if the "fall of man" did not occur, sin did not enter the world by the disobedience of Eve; and it is not necessary for a redeemer to suffer the sacrifice imputed to Jesus and entailed by the supposed fault of our ancestors.

During the explorations of the ancient cities of Assyria and Babylon, a number of clay tablets were discovered in 1875, and again in 1887, at Tel-el-Amarna, in Egypt. Evidently, relics of an ancient library containing the official correspondence between the king of Egypt and the officers and sovereigns of Assyria, Babylon and other Asiatic countries. A tablet was also discovered among the ruins of Lashish, in Southern Palestine. They disclose the originals of the above legends.

We are waiting anxiously to hear some rousing good reports from the organized Freethinkers of the country. Descriptive files when no man, but Agencies are bold as lions.

**SOME COSTLY CHURCH PEWS.**

So great is the demand for pews in St. John's Episcopal church—which immediately opposite the White House, with but the beautiful Lafayette Square intervening—that it is the custom to place them at auction whenever a pew owner dies or permanently leaves Washington, and a few were recently purchased in this church for \$3,000, the highest price on record, according to a Washington letter to the New York Tribune.

New York prices for pews easily surpass the Washington record. A pew in the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian church has been sold for \$5,000. The costliest pews in the metropolis, and probably in America, are in Temple Emanuel-El, Fifth Avenue and Forty-third street. For annual rent in this synagogue \$6,000 has been paid. Average rentals are from \$2,000 to \$3,000. The price for a new rented just for the two holidays of the Passover and New Year, last year \$615 was paid for two seats.

Old Trinity church has few pews to sell, and limits its price to \$125, plus annual ground rent of about \$35, but a few pews recently in the settlement of an estate brought \$500.

St. Bartholomew's Protestant Episcopal church once received \$30,000 for a pew, but this was hardly a legitimate market quotation, being in the nature of a gift to help the church to meet a debt.

At St. Patrick's Catholic Cathedral \$1,000 is the record per rent. Two blocks above the cathedral, pews in the temporary structure of St.

Thomas bring from \$1,000 to \$1,500. In Brooklyn the best Plymouth church pews rent for \$200 each, and there are fourteen of them. Other pews are as cheap as \$5.

**VAUABLE PAINE LETTER.**

At a recent sale of Philadelphia, of the letters and papers of Elbridge Gerry, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, a letter by Thomas Paine, brought \$31. Paine's letter, dated at Paris, Prarial 10, 6 year (May 29, 1798), as copied by Mr. Jas. H. Elliott, is as follows:

"Sir: I sent you the enclosed paper this morning by Mr. Barlow, but as you were not at home he returned it to me. I send it again, but with the injunction that you return it to-morrow morning at the farthest, as I intend to send it afterwards to Lafayette-Lepeaux. Whether it was produced in John Adams to make the information it contains public is a matter I leave to your own judgment, or whether it was prudent in the Commissioners to hold conference with unauthorized persons in which the Directory is implicated. I also leave to you to judge of the persons who employed themselves in this business are concealed under the cyphers W. X. G. X., but they ought to be known in order that the suspicion may not fall on other persons."

**"THOMAS PAINE."**

Blade Will Still Come.

McCONNELLSVILLE, O., Dec. 23.—Jas. E. Hughes, Lexington, Ky.: My Dear Sir: Your paper came to me this week in the old form, which I always did like when Bro. Moore had charge of it. I told you when my time was up to stop the paper, and I was not able to take it. I am 73 years old, and crippled up with the rheumatism. While I am sorry to part with it, for I have taken it so

long, I will try and do all I can for you. My time was up last May, and as soon as I can I will remit to you the amount I owe. Yours—J. H. WHITAKER.

Is your name on the Blade muster roll?

Now is the accepted time to arise, hump yourself and do something to keep the Blade's head up.

The Blade is making preparations for a strenuous campaign and urges its friends to give all possible encouragement in spreading the beneficial light of Free thought over the land.

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In  
**THE ORIENT**  
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